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Adoptable animals left after
Minneapolis Animal Care and Control's
"Clear the Shelter" event last week—300
people came out for it

**"Might as well have gone with that weird S
that everyone drew in junior high."**

Reader Karl Juhnke responds to "Hey look:
Surly just redesigned its logo, cans" at
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SAFER STREETS

ON FRIDAY, dozens gathered at North 12th Street and Lincoln Avenue in downtown Minneapolis, where 30-year-old cyclist Alex Wolf was killed by a turning semi days before. Holding signs calling for safer streets, they stood arm to arm, forming a human bike lane to honor the 11th cyclist killed on Minnesota roads this year. "Alex had a quiet and genuine concern for others and the world he lived in," his father, Keith, wrote in an obituary. "He accepted others and encouraged them to be their best selves." Speaking with Fox 9, he added—in a superhuman display of empathy—that he bears no ill will toward the driver: "Accidents happen, but if there's anything that the city can do to make those lanes safer and put up more guards so people have to slow down, that's what we want."

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SHOT DOWN

St. Paul asks: So, does ShotSpotter actually work?

St. Paul is having a record year for gun violence, with 26 out of 29 homicides involving firearms. The numbers are arresting figures on their own. Last Wednesday, St. Paul City Council Member Dai Thao made things personal.

"I want to just ask you, do you think that my kids are important to you?" he asked Mayor Melvin Carter.

"Excuse me?" Carter replied.

Thao repeated the question. The two talked over one another for a moment or two before Carter cut Thao off.

"Council member, you asked a question," he said. "Would you like the answer?"

It soon became clear that Carter and Thao were talking about ShotSpotter, a computer program that relies on a network of outdoor microphones tuned to the sounds of gunfire. Recorded gunshots turn into points on a map, in theory to help officers respond to the sound whether residents report it or not.

Thao wants to deploy ShotSpotter in St. Paul, but Carter has misgivings without an "independent, third-party evaluation" showing ShotSpotter is actually effective.

"If you can produce that," Carter told Thao, "I would love to reconsider and revisit that topic. But I think it would be a mistake for us to confuse buying one particular toy with reducing gun violence in our community.... We owe it to ourselves [and] to your beautiful children that when we spend a million dollars on public safety investments, that it actually makes us safer."

Carter isn't the first person to ask if ShotSpotter works. It's being used in just shy of 100 U.S. cities, and law enforcement, researchers, and public officials still haven't figured out how to answer that question.

As a 2016 piece by Forbes pointed out, the technology is pretty reliable, with occasional false alarms. The more important test of its worth is whether it reduces gun violence. Some hard-won data from seven cities using the technology found the "clear pattern"



TWITTER

was "lots of calls, but few tangible results."

"Of the thousands of ShotSpotter alerts in these cities, police were unable to find evidence of gunshots between 30 to 70 percent of the time," Forbes reported. "The question now is whether the technology is worth the millions of dollars it's costing taxpayers each year."

But ShotSpotter has its fair share of "happy customers," as reported by Time magazine in 2017. A New York Police Department specialist called it "one of [their] most successful programs."

In his argument last week, Carter cited a research piece in Police Chief Magazine

on "acoustic gunshot detection systems," which studied the use of ShotSpotter in St. Louis.

The report suggested the positive view of ShotSpotter and its peers might have been more due to a "broad downward slide in crime that has taken place since the 1990s" and "a few highly publicized cases" instead of the program's own merits.

It's probably not the last we'll hear about ShotSpotter in St. Paul. As Thao said, it's ultimately Carter's decision whether to invest in the program, but he's hoping an "informed" public will put some external pressure on the issue. —HANNAH JONES

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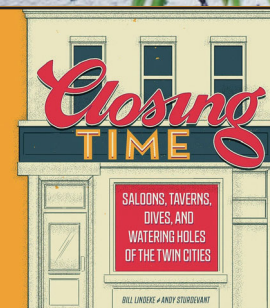
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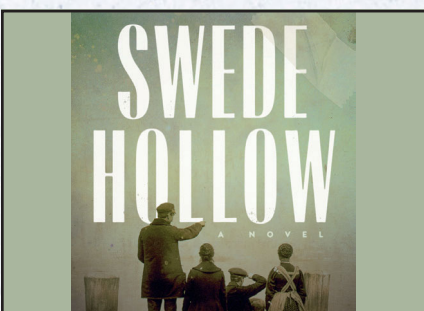
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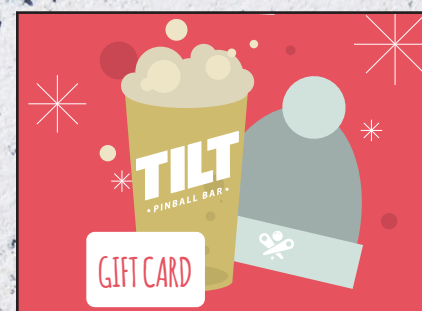
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Your favorite restaurant is closer to going under than you think. Here's what they're trying to do about it.

BY EMILY CASSEL

From the outside, everything looked perfect at Funky Grits. Less than a year after opening, Jared Brewington's south Minneapolis soul food restaurant got the invite of a lifetime: a booth at the Minnesota State Fair. They accepted, of course, and they crushed it—the shrimp fritters were a hit, among the most universally liked new items of 2019. Brewington's face was all over local media. Funky Grits was having A Moment.

And then, weeks after that explosion of praise, Brewington made another announcement: His restaurant was closing.

"People are wondering how I'm closing down and opening a coffee shop when I just made 'millions' at the State Fair," he says. "Even if I say it was expensive, they're like, 'Yeah, but you had to have made millions. You were everywhere.'"

Any time we lose a beloved restaurant or bar—the sudden shutter of Uptown Italian gem Al Vento earlier this month, the end of U of M dive-bar treasure Sporty's before that—the news is met with the same cocktail of shock and sadness. We wonder how the goodwill and attentive service we just experienced on Saturday didn't correspond to big-digit earnings. On the other side, there's always someone who just *knows* the restaurant went under because—and you'll have to fill in the blank here—prices got too high/minimum wage laws are destroying this city/liberals are destroying this city/poor people are destroying this city.

(Or because parking there sucked.)

The \$15 minimum wage increase in Minneapolis and St. Paul isn't a non-issue. Restaurant owners certainly are thinking (and, in many cases, worrying) about it. It's also not the only financial concern. Healthcare, rent, property taxes—they're all on the rise, and restaurants run on almost laughably low profit margins as is.

Diners don't want prices to go up. Restaurant owners want to stay in business. Costs—for almost everything—are climbing.

How is this going to work?

"MOST RESTAURANT owners are very prideful people, like any business owner would be," says Brent Frederick, owner of Jester Concepts (the restaurant group

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Jared Brewington,
Funky Grits

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behind Parlour/Borough and P.S. Steak, among others). “I think it’s hard for them to admit that they’re not doing so well, that the industry is really tough, that they make a small salary and have razor-thin margins and can’t make much of a profit.”

“A lot of people on the outside looking in look at it as a kind of fly-by-night industry,” he adds. “But there’s people that are putting up their houses, putting a second mortgage, third mortgage on their house.... People are risking it all, and I don’t think anybody understands.”

If there’s not a lot of sympathy to go around for struggling restaurants, that could be because their owners don’t always present as very sympathetic characters. In the last month alone, two widely reported-upon closings served as case studies in just that. There was Rojo on Nicollet Mall, whose owner blamed July and August shootings in downtown Minneapolis, the increased minimum wage, and high property taxes for the Mexican grill’s demise. It wasn’t made clear how those factors retroactively led to the closure of his previous con-

cepts at that address: Randle’s, which shuttered back in March, and Ling & Louie’s Asian Bar & Grill (2014-2017), which came before it.

“Man, I would love to have enough money to tank three restaurants,” read one popular comment on that City Pages story.)

There’s also O’Gara’s in St. Paul. Owner Dan O’Gara sold the 77-year-old bar to a development company in 2018, but planned to bring the old-school institution back to a smaller, ground-floor space in the new apartment complex. On November 4, O’Gara announced that the bar wouldn’t return after all, citing too-high state and city taxes and fees, the burden of paid sick leave and minimum wage without a tip credit, and competition from taprooms.

That felt a little disingenuous to a lot of people, including Wes Burdine, owner of the Black Hart of St. Paul, who tweeted: “Dude just sold his building for \$4.5m dollars. That is \$3.5m more than what it was bought for just over a decade ago. Congrats buddy, enjoy your retirement.”



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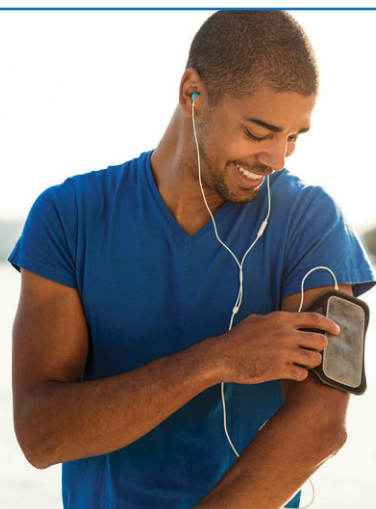


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“As someone who cares really deeply about the city... I was very frustrated to see the amount of great work and the amount of growth we’ve seen in the city of St. Paul get dismissed by someone who, by their hard work but also all these other things, just made a lot of money,” says Burdine, whose bar is only about a mile from the former O’Gara’s. “Here’s someone blaming the city, when he just came out with millions of dollars. I just thought that was really frustrating.”

Admittedly, it’s not a good look. It reads both entitled and aggressively out of touch for a person who just sold their building for millions to say an incremental hourly wage increase caused their financial woes.

But bars like O’Gara’s are the exception, not the rule. The perception that restaurant owners are out here Scrooge McDucking into vaults full of money—on the whole, that’s not the case.

“I think that’s one of the longest myths in the restaurant profession,” says Alma chef-owner Alex Roberts.

An oft-cited bit of wisdom is that in the restaurant industry, your profit margin typically spans from 0 to 15 percent. Full-service spots should expect about a 3 to 5 percent average profit margin; for quick-service, the numbers are more like 6 to 9 percent. Some, like Frederick, think it’s even lower than that.

“I would say that most restaurants are operating at even or negative cashflow or profitability,” he says. “I would say 70 or 80 percent are not making money.”

And this is, of course, after you’ve shelled out your startup costs, which can vary widely but have a median around \$375,500, per one recent restaurantowner.com survey. “They might be able to pay themselves

WHEN INDUSTRY FOLKS blame the minimum wage for draining their bank accounts, it can sound a lot like woe-is-me buck-passing. But with margins that slim, any increase in expenses has an outsized impact. A cold snap in Georgia can double the cost of collard greens. A busted freezer might mean you don’t take home a salary that month. Even a difference of a few

“There’s people that are putting up their houses. People are risking it all, and I don’t think anybody understands.”

a management fee or a salary or something like that,” Frederick continues, “but they’re not making money for the people who invested in them: friends, families.”

“Generally, most restaurant operators don’t have the scale of a financial controller or a CFO,” Roberts adds. “A 3 percent profit, depending on how you’re managing cashflow, can look like you’re breaking even. For many people, you’re one big repair away from not being able to pay your bills.”

dollars an hour per employee can throw your bottom line into chaos.

In Minneapolis, wages are now \$12.25 for employers with more than 100 employees and \$11 for those with fewer; large businesses will have to hit \$15 in 2023 while small businesses have until 2024.

“It stresses me out at Sandcastle,” says Doug Flicker, who owns the seasonal Lake Nokomis seafood and sandwich spot along with the bar-restaurant Bull’s Horn in

Standish-Ericsson. “At Sandcastle, it’s grab-and-go—it’s meant to be a first job, for teens. And it takes two kids to do the work of one adult person.”

Flicker isn’t arguing against a livable wage. (Although: “Part of me wishes the city would have just implemented 15 right away. Then everybody would have had to have figured something out, as opposed to just kicking the can down the road.”) At Bull’s Horn, it means raising prices 10 or 15 cents every summer when the wage notches up. Their business is high-volume, and it’s bar food—if he still owned the more fine-dining Piccolo, those markups would probably be higher and harder to achieve. Plus: “We sell a lot of beer, you know? The markup on beer is really good. We have full liquor. That helps our margins.”

“Concerns for the minimum wage are really tough, and they’re really real,” Black Hart’s Burdine says—it’s why he wasn’t sure he should tweet his frustrations with O’Gara’s in the first place. “I know a lot of great business owners who try to do right by all their employees, and they’re not sure how to make it work in a few years.”

The timeline is different in St. Paul, where businesses with more than 100 employees will need to pay \$11.50 hourly in July 2020, with incremental increases until reaching \$15 in July 2024. Those employing between



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NEWS
NEWSLETTER

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Restaurant
Alma



ZOE PRINDS-FLASH

5 and 100 workers have to hit \$10 next year, and reach \$15 in 2026.

Burdine has already started raising wages—“which is a great thing”—but it means prices have to go up, too. It’s a tricky balancing act: You don’t want to be known for having a beer and a bump that’s a buck more than your neighbors’ (and competitors’). And if people want to pay a little less, they have the option to go out in Roseville or Edina, where the minimum wage has stayed stagnant, which means bars and restaurants in the Twin Cities might see fewer folks walking through their doors.

“Fifteen dollars an hour is extremely helpful, but it certainly has its—there will be bad effects that come from it, and people just need to adjust.

“It’s not like every restaurant is suddenly going to disappear,” Burdine continues. “But it is going to get tough for existing restaurants to adjust to that. Because consumers are not ready to pay \$5, \$5.50, \$6 for a Bud Light. And that is coming in the near future. It’s coming.”

Something else you should expect to see: more health and wellness charges on the bottom of your bill. Because while the minimum wage is one thing, healthcare is a bigger, meaner, harder-to-plan-for beast.

Kim Bartmann was the first in town to add a health and wellness charge in her restaurants in June of 2017. She says her premiums have gone up 25 to 30 percent each year for probably the last four to five years. (“At least.”) Under the Affordable Care Act, employers with more than 50 workers clocking 30-plus hours have to provide a health insurance benefit, or pay penalties. So at Bartmann Group restaurants like Tiny Diner and Barquette, there’s an addendum at the bottom of the menu: “In order to maintain health & wellness benefits for our employees, [restaurant] adds a 3% employee wellness

service charge to guest checks.”

“The costs keep going up, and it was impossible to keep pace,” she says. “We thought it was important to be transparent about it.”

It’s been popping up all over the Twin Cities since: Roberts introduced one at Alma, and Jester Concepts restaurants all have the charge. Parasole Restaurants (Manny’s, Chino Latino), Craft and Crew Hospitality (the Howe Daily Kitchen & Bar, Stanley’s Northeast Bar Room), the Lexington, Travail and Pig Ate My Pizza in Robbinsdale—all are among those now tacking on a health insurance fee.

“Some of the criticism I got was, ‘Well, why don’t you just raise prices?’” Bartmann says. “We didn’t do that because we want people to know that we’re offering health insurance to our employees and have it be part of the conversation.”

“For us, we wanted to keep it separate from increasing our prices, because it resonates differently with people when they see that as a line item... rather than, ‘My burger that I’ve been coming in for the last three years to get just went up whatever percent,’” adds David Benowitz, COO of Craft and Crew. The dog-friendly restaurant group added a 3 percent charge in January that helps pay for healthcare along with mental health services for staff. “Our places, we try to create a sense of community. We’re very family, neighborhood oriented. People see us as that in terms of our locations, so in some sense, they’re helping the extension of their community and family.

“Especially as the minimum wage increases,” he goes on, “I think you’ll see more and more restaurants start adding it.”

ASKED IF IT’S FAIR to say restaurants are under increasing financial pressure from all sides, Bartmann fires back: “I would say more like under siege.”



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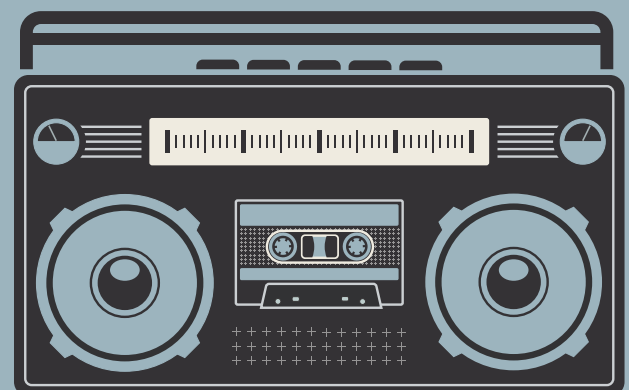
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ZOE PRINDS-FLASH

As for whether they'll be able to adapt? "Frankly, a lot of them aren't going to be able to," she says. "You will see a lot of washout over the next couple years."

The answer seems obvious enough: Well, fine, then don't open a restaurant. And it does raise the question of why anyone chooses to do it.

But if you like to go out to eat and drink, then you need somewhere to do that, and these are people who have spent their whole lives providing you with places where you can. They fell into it, and then in love with it: Frederick started bussing tables at 20, working as a server, a bartender, and a bar manager before going on to open restaurants of his own.

"You don't get into restaurants because you want to make a million dollars—you're in the wrong industry," he says. "You get into it because you love food, and you love wine, and you love the people."

...You'll notice he didn't say anything about loving accounting.

"That's why there's a few groups out there—and I belong to a few of them—that we're getting together and we're helping each other."

Frederick says that 20 or even 10 years ago, the people who were successful tended to hold their secrets close. Now he thinks there's a "movement afoot" in the industry—chefs are talking with other chefs, owners with other owners, GMs with other GMs.

"What I'm seeing right now—and I think it started because of the minimum wage talks—everybody's getting together. And we're not afraid to be like, 'Hey, how much are you paying for linen right now? What's your food deal look like? What liquor supplier are you using?'"

"Because we know how tough it is," he continues. "It's kind of like therapy."

"When I thought about doing [a wellness charge], I called Kim Bartmann, and she talked to me about why she did what she did," Roberts says. "And then other people called me, you know? 'How's it going?' and 'What's going on?' I think everybody's struggling with the same things, and there's a lot of people I really admire in this business that are taking it on."

These are trying times in a lot of industries—restaurant owners know that. But they're in the business of hospitality, and that means providing a living wage and healthcare for employees just as much as it means giving you a barstool where you can vent about your own job woes over a Hamm's. It means trying new things and seeing what sticks.

Even if it's imperfect, they're working on it—fumbling toward taking care of each other, so they can take care of... you.

"People dine today to have an experience," Benowitz adds. "But we can't create that experience unless we have amazing people creating that experience." 

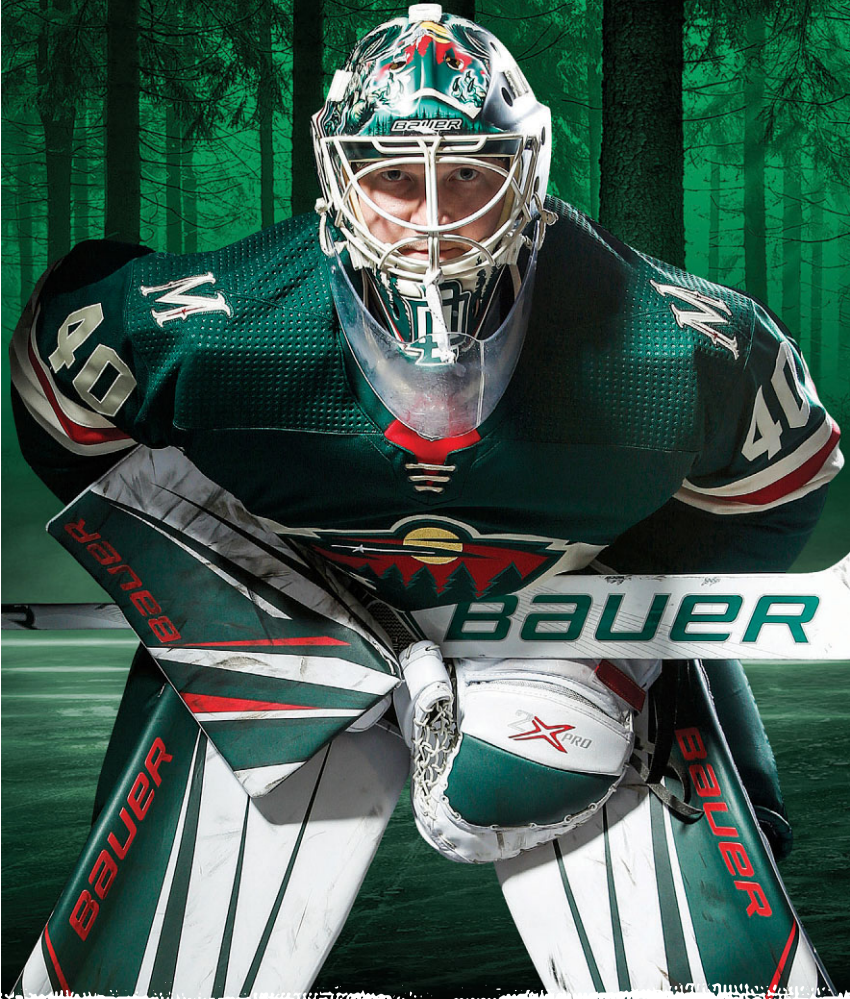


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SARAH BRUMBLE

MINNEAPOLIS' CITY HALL IS HOME TO A TRULY FANTASTIC BREAKFAST SANDWICH

Reasons to visit the epicenter of municipal governance are pretty limited, and usually have nothing to do with eggs.

City Council meetings are sparsely attended. City Hall marriages (ideally) only happen once in a lifetime and, well, a limited entourage is kinda the point. Beyond that, folks usually only end up at City Hall if they're 1) in trouble, 2) trying to wiggle out of said trouble, or 3) working for The Man.

Then one day a kindly, diligent tipster hinted that a little shop called the Chewery might just be worth a trip to City Hall on its own. They included lofty proclamations like, "hands down the best breakfast sandwich I've ever had," and "it would never have occurred to me to look to City Hall for amazing food, but damned if they don't have something truly spectacular going on in that little kitchen." Still, we couldn't help but be skeptical.

And yet they were right.

The Chewery is owned and run by Lori James. Come April, she'll have been serving outstanding breakfast sandwiches from the "Breakfast Boogie Bites" menu and "Dynamite Sandwiches" for two years.

"Everything you see, we came up with on our own, like the Brickhouse, the Jive Turkey—they're all '70s words. The Fancy pants? It just kind of makes you feel good," said James.

She and her daughter, Aqueelah Hysten, work like a tag team preparing sandwiches to order beginning at 6:30 a.m. weekday mornings, including the uber-popular #1. This breakfast feast of a sandwich is made with egg, pecan-smoked bacon, and maple cheddar, and arrives ooey-goey on

an onion-cheddar bialy with their house maple aioli oozing out the sides.

This sandwich is every bit as good as billed, and the reason the Chewery has devotees.

The pecan and maple bring an unexpected sweet element that most breakfast sandwiches lack, without being overbearing thanks to a tang of cheddar and a little pop from the onion in the bun. It's also nearly the size of a Big Mac, costs less than \$6, and is available all day (or until they run out of eggs). It comes wrapped in gilded foil that makes you feel you're holding a prize from the Golden Goose herself, and with a thick stack of napkins you'll need.

The Chewery isn't easy to find. It has no website or social media presence. The people who love it likely first learned about it through word of mouth (just like us).

Located on the "ground floor" (code for basement), the Chewery is tucked behind the grand staircase near... nothing, past the Father of Waters statue, maybe in the same ballpark as the Hennepin County Sheriff's civil filing office. The Chewery might not have windows, but it does have what's surely the only two-foot-wide, sanctioned peace sign in City Hall.

The story of this mirage of a breakfast nook began nearly three years ago, when James found herself strolling through City Hall with a friend who was a mail carrier, remarking at how the place had changed.

"Goodness sakes, this is a shell! Everybody's so stoic and straight-faced in City Hall... I could try for this place," she recalls saying, "make it into a breakfast joint—'70s [theme] of course, because I grew up in the '70s—and try to bring camaraderie back to City Hall."

By following through, James became the first African-American woman to own and operate a restaurant in City Hall. Monumental as that is, James may take even greater pride in knowing her customers' names and sowing goodwill every day, one astoundingly good breakfast sandwich at a time.

Need an example? In the middle of telling the Chewery's origin story, James didn't just shout hello to a customer by name; she went so far as to ask how their work's been going, which topic that day's chamber council presentation would cover, and encouraged them to keep their "spiritual boxing gloves ready."

In this way, the Chewery truly is a time warp. People talk to each other. Jams from the '70s drift through the air. Smiles abound. "I treat everyone the same, from a homeless person to the mayor. No one gets treated better. I wake up every day and look forward to it," beams James. "I just love people."

Go get a sandwich (any sandwich—though we, and apparently all of City Hall, are partial to the #1) and see what we're talking about. But be forewarned: Give yourself an extra five minutes to gab.

The Chewery, 401 Third Ave. S., Minneapolis; Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. —SARAH BRUMBLE

HOW VON HANSON'S PRETZELS BECAME MINNESOTA'S UBIQUITOUS TAPROOM SNACK

From Rochester to Minneapolis to Two Harbors, little plastic pretzel tubs have become an omnipresent taproom snack.

Specifically, seasoned pretzels from Von Hanson's, a 35-year-old Minnesota butcher-shop chain that only entered the wholesale snack game in 2017. In just two years, the business has become a twisty, salty, flavor-blasted Midwest empire, with presences in a dozen states and dozens upon dozens of breweries.

Jon Tennesen, co-owner of Von Hanson's Snacks, was determined to diversify from within the meat biz.

"I wanted to do something else; I wanted to start selling pretzels," he says. "It blossomed from there."

Things began humbly, with Tennesen and co-owner Craig Machholz selling the pretzels out of their Monticello butcher shop. The owners of Big Lake's Lupulin Brewing got a taste, Tennesen remembers, and were hooked. The first of what would become many breweries was on board.

"We got turned down a little bit in the beginning," Tennesen says. "But once people realized you can sell a salty snack in your taproom—and it's most likely gonna make someone say, 'I need another beer'—to have a thirsty customer, and word of mouth, it's been huge."

Austin Lee, co-founder of Minneapolis' HeadFlyer Brewing, notices Von Hanson's Pretzels "everywhere." His taproom initially started offering free snacks, but that generosity quickly proved unsustainable. A sample-toting sales rep sold Lee and his partners on Von Hanson's Pretzels, which retail for \$3-\$5 and come in flavors like Zesty Herb, Dill Ranch, and Parmesan.

"They've been extremely good to us and we even now carry their beef sticks," Lee says. "As somewhere that doesn't serve food, it's huge for us to have a snack option to keep hungry patrons inside the taproom."

In Minneapolis alone, Von Hanson's Pretzels are sold at Venn, Indeed, Sisypus, Utepils, 612Brew, and... the list of breweries just keeps going.

And it's not just taprooms. High schools, golf courses, bowling alleys, and sports arenas throughout the state all carry Von Hanson's Pretzels. After starting at "ground zero," the production facility in Becker is expected to churn out 150,000 pounds of pretzels next year, Tennesen predicts. Von Hanson's Snacks has exceeded 2019 revenue expectations by six figures, he says, and the company will make over \$1 million on pretzels alone.

North Dakota-launched Dot's might get the all the glory, but Von Hanson's has established itself as a major regional pretzel force.

"When we sit back and kinda look at this," Tennesen says, "it's quite amazing." —JAY BOLLER

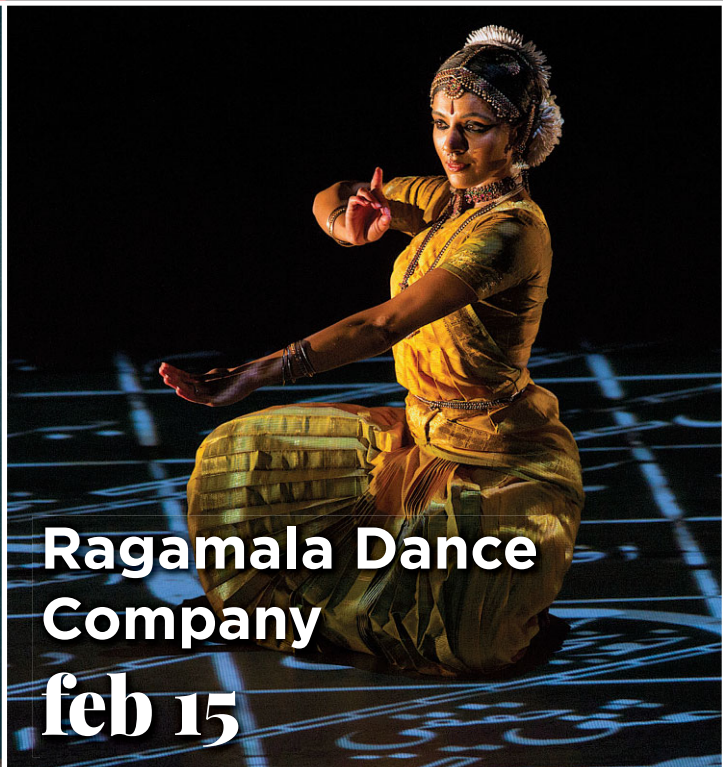


VON HANSON'S

UP NEXT AT THE ORDWAY



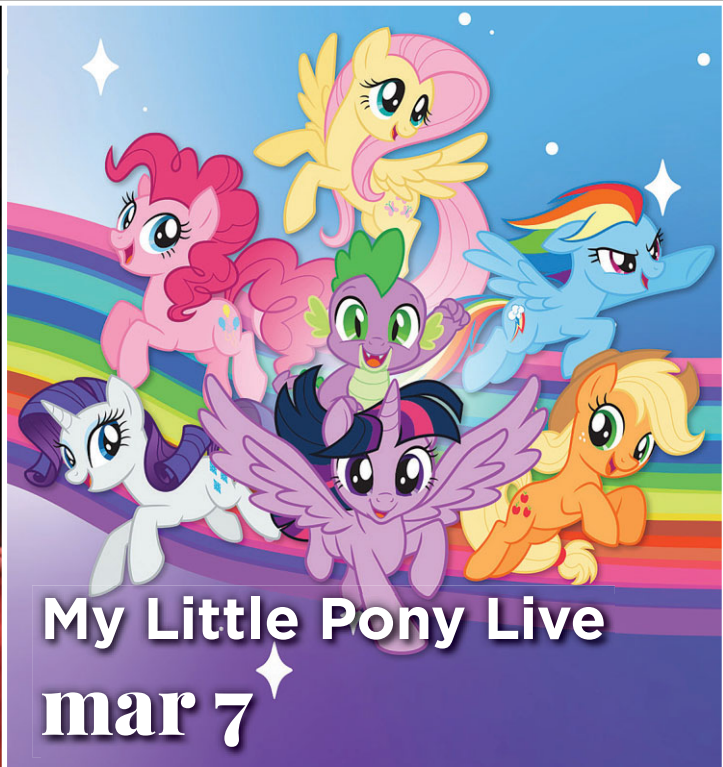
Rita Moreno
dec 3



Ragamala Dance Company
feb 15



HERbeat: Taiko Women ALL-STARS
feb 29



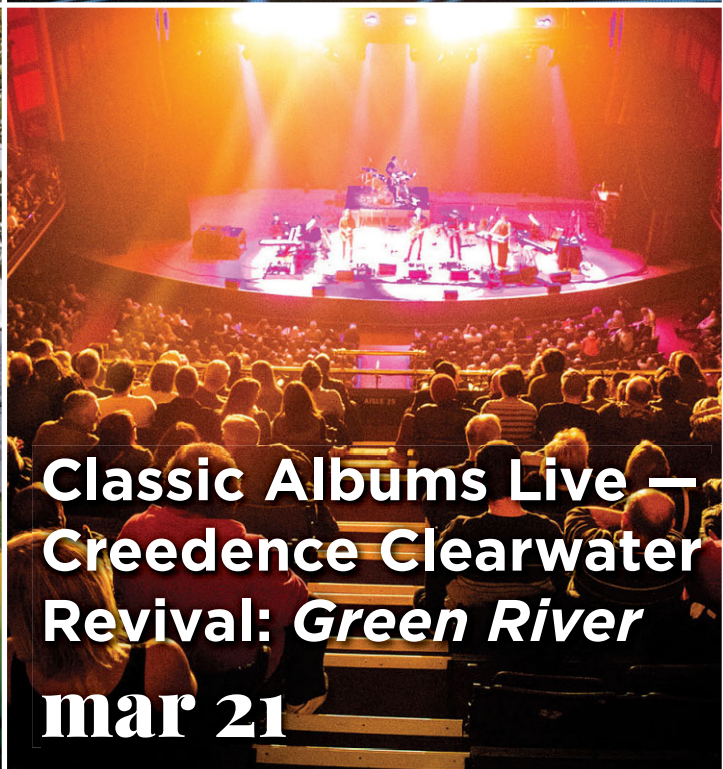
My Little Pony Live
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Classic Albums Live — Creedence Clearwater Revival: *Green River*
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DJ LAST WORD

DEC
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WITH RATBOYS, LAST IMPORT

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WITH LOCAL H, PORCUPINE

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27

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A NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATION
WITH DJ JAKE RUDH

DEC
31

PALACE THEATRE

KIM PETRAS
WITH ALEX CHAPMAN

NOV
30

THE JAYHAWKS

DEC
21

MANDOLIN
ORANGE

JAN
30

MICHAEL
KIWANUKA

FEB
03

KING PRINCESS

FEB
04

FITZGERALD THEATER

ERIC BENÉT

NOV
29

MASON JENNINGS
WITH FRANKIE LEE

DEC
07

LOW
CHRISTMAS SHOW

DEC
13

HOT TUNA
WITH LARRY CAMPBELL &
TERESA WILLIAMS

DEC
14

NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC LIVE
WITH KARA COONEY

JAN
12

FINE LINE

STUFF IT
W/ DJ ROWSHEEN, ANDER OTHER,
NeekaSoDope

NOV 27

ALLAH-LAS
W/ MAPACHE & TIM HILL

NOV 29

CAUTIOUS CLAY
W/ REMI WOLF

DEC 02

THE 40NTHFLOOR
W/ THE SHACKLETONS

NOV 29

CAT CLYDE
W/ JEREMIE ALBINO

DEC 03

SAMANTHA FISH
W/ MARK JOSEPH &
THE AMERICAN SOUL

DEC 06

MORBID ANGEL
W/ WATAIN, INCANTATION

DEC 07

OLD 97'S
W/ CASEYMAGIC, RHETT MILLER

DEC 10

RADIOCHURCH
EP RELEASE
W/ DJ STEPMOM

NOV 30

ODD DAUGHTERS
W/ SAVAGE MOODS, DEEP SEA

DEC 04

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A TRIBUTE TO THE
REPLACEMENTS
FT. THE MELISMATICS & MORE

NOV 29

THE 40NTHFLOOR
W/ KOO KOO KANGA ROO,
THE SHACKLETONS

NOV 30

JOAN SHELLEY
W/ DAUGHTER OF SWORDS

DEC 04

GUILY BOYS
W/ PIERRE, HARPER'S JAR,
HEART TO GOLD

DEC 01

EMAROSA
W/ TOO CLOSE TO TOUCH, VAINES

DEC 05

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TOMORROW'S PETTY
W/ TRIVIA MAFIA'S SEAN MCPHERSON
PRESENTS PETTY QUESTIONS

DEC 05

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W/ RAMONA, NIGHT DANGERS

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JAMS AND GEMS OF THE 2010S
W/ ANDER OTHER, CHRIS CLOUD, FoolProof

DEC 07

AROUND TOWN

MOUNT EERIE
W/ JULIE DOIRON
THE CEDAR CULTURAL CENTER

DEC 08

ALLAN RAYMAN
W/ NOAH SONIE
AMSTERDAM BAR & HALL

DEC 11

MADISON MCFERRIN
W/ JESSICA MANNING
Icehouse MPLS

DEC 12

MIPSO
W/ BRIDGET KEARNEY &
BENJAMIN LAZAR DAVIS
THE CEDAR CULTURAL CENTER

JAN 26

POPPY
AMSTERDAM BAR & HALL

JAN 30

A LIST

SATURDAY *A Die Very Hard Christmas* kicks ass at BLB p. 26

SUNDAY Beer, a sock drive, and a makers' mart at Surly p. 29

Things get pretty in the park this season at the Arboretum.



JASON BOUDREAU-LANDIS

WEDNESDAY 11.27

COMEDY

DREW MICHAEL

ACME COMEDY CO.

Drew Michael's star continues to rise. After releasing two popular comedy albums, 2013's *Lovely* and 2016's *Funny to Death*, he filmed a critically acclaimed HBO special last year, simply titled *Drew Michael*. "I get depressed,"

he tells an audience, "and my therapist asked me about that. 'Are you suicidal?' I said, 'No I'm not.' But I do think about suicide. Not that I want to do it, but if I did do it, what would a funny way be?" Michael also tackles religion. "I don't believe in the traditional view of God, the one you're taught in church," he says. "This idea that there is a singular entity that created all life? If that's true, there are only two types of God there

could be. The first one has a morbid sense of humor. 'Some people are going to want to play baseball more than anything. But they won't be good enough!'" The other kind, he explains, "is an inept asshole. This is the best he could do with all the power in the universe? This is not that good. It's fine. It's adequate. It's not excellent." 18+. 8 p.m. Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday; 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. \$20.

708 N. First St., Minneapolis; 612-338-6393. **Through Saturday —P.F. WILSON**

FRIDAY 11.29

HOLIDAY

HOLIDAZZLE 2019

LORING PARK

In days of yore, Holidazzle was a lighted parade that cruised through downtown,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24 ►

**FRIDAY
THEATER**
SIX

 ORDWAY CENTER FOR
THE PERFORMING ARTS

The Ordway's original musicals have been among the strongest productions in the Twin Cities over the past few years, so why all the buzz over a touring show? Well, this one is a little different. Instead of wandering to Minnesota after a Broadway run, this production is hitting the Cities just before its Broadway debut—and with the same leading actors, so local audiences can see a show that's very similar to the one landing on the Great White Way in February. *Hamilton* demonstrated that musical audiences are ready to see history revisited through new perspectives, and the audiences who've seen *Six* have raved about the way it uses a pop-concert format to celebrate the unsung wives of Henry VIII. Given that Henry's kingdom would one day birth the Spice Girls, the concept is a natural fit. A sensation created by two then-undergraduate theater artists in the U.K., *Six* also bucks the Broadway trend toward jukebox musicals and revivals. It's all new, and you can see it in St. Paul first. 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays through Sundays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. \$35. 345 Washington St., St. Paul; 651-224-4222. **Through December 22 —JAY GABLER**



LIZ LAUREN

CONTINUED FROM FRIDAY ►

messing up traffic and confusing bus commuters. It had to go. Now the event has morphed into something more functional: a winter festival for families and barhoppers alike. Each week offers a handful of new things to experience and explore. There will be outdoor movie screenings, including classics like *A Christmas Story*, *Elf*, and *Home Alone*. In addition to pouring Fulton brews, the beer garden will offer board and card games to play, and nights include vinyl DJ sets (Thursdays) and bingo led by drag queens (Fridays). A kids' play area will keep the little ones busy, and Santa will show up every day. Other wintertime fun to be had: ice skating on the open rink, tasty eats from local businesses, fireworks every Saturday night, and *Yeti*, a new twinkling light installation by Christopher Lutter-Gardella. Find the complete list of activities and schedules at holidazzle.com. 5 to 9 p.m. Thursdays; 5 to 10 p.m. Fridays; 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturdays; 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sundays. Free. 1382 Willow St., Minneapolis. **Through December 22 —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER**

HOLIDAY
**WINTER LIGHTS AT
THE ARBORETUM**

MINNESOTA LANDSCAPE ARBORETUM
Just in time for the holidays, the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

in Carver County transforms into a bonanza of lights, decorations, and yuletide cheer. Bundle up and shove a bunch of those hand-warmer things into your boots, then stroll through the 13 amazing light installations. There are plenty of new, botanically themed displays each year, so even if you visit every winter it's still a fresh sensory experience. Oh, and the Arb boasts a giant metal snake, which is super badass no matter what time of year it is. Be sure to hop up on the ice throne and snap some pics for the 'gram, then pick up a s'mores kit and get your roast on at one of the bonfire spots located throughout the grounds. If you're not in the mood to freeze but still want to be a part of the festivities, there is a bananas 25-foot-tall live poinsettia tree inside the Arboretum's Great Hall, decorated with cool botany-inspired ornaments. There's a cash bar, too, because the only thing better than staring at Christmas lights is staring at Christmas lights with a smooth hot chocolate-and-whiskey buzz. 5 to 9 p.m. Fridays through Sundays, plus December 23, 26, and 30, and January 1-2. \$15; kids 15 and under are free. 3675 Arboretum Dr., Chaska; 612-624-2200. **Through January 5 —PATRICK STRAIT**

BARHOPPING
SOCIABLE ANNIVERSARY PARTY

SOCIABLE CIDER WERKS

This Friday, the folks at Sociable are skipping shopping, choosing instead to celebrate six years of cider making. During the day, the Northeast hotspot will be releasing 12 special-edition brews, one for each hour of the event. One offering is the Fat Bike Mulled Apple, a new wintertime treat featuring cinnamon, cloves, orange peel, and other festive flavors. For those still in mall mode, the Minneapolis Craft Market will be on hand, offering a variety of handmade goods from local artists, and Shameless Mpls will be selling screen-printed pieces. In honor of their new beer release, Sociable will also be giving away custom-built bikes from Handsome Cycles; every pint you order scores you an entry ticket. Noon to midnight. Free. 1500 Fillmore St. NE, Minneapolis; 612-758-0105. **—JESSICA ARMBRUSTER**

ART/FILM
BRITISH ARROWS AWARDS 2019

WALKER ART CENTER

Watching ads from another country feels a little bit like entering a parallel dimension. The humor is slightly different, the cultural touchstones aren't quite the same, and sometimes the products aren't even sold in your area (though that is changing rapidly in the wake of globalization). See

what we mean at Walker Art Center, as the British Arrows return with another wild collection of commercials from the United Kingdom. Some feel like mini-movies, some use dark humor, and some look like they were very expensive to make (big-budget advertising: a universal language!). Regardless, these spots weren't made for or targeted at you, so hopefully you'll emerge from your viewing without a subliminal urge to buy something. For showtimes and ticket availability, visit walkerart.org. \$14. 725 Vineland Place, Minneapolis; 612-375-7600. **Through December 29 —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER**

FILM
UP ALL NIGHT

TRYLON CINEMA

Under ordinary circumstances, binging five feature-length films in a single setting wouldn't be considered a healthy choice. But Trylon Cinema's Up All Night is special. Commencing at 9 p.m. and continuing until daybreak, the nocturnal event offers the like-minded company of fellow movie enthusiasts enjoying a gloriously gluttonous exhibition of cinema. Though the Trylon is keeping the movie selections a surprise (described only as a five-film lineup containing such genres as comedy, adventure, exploitation, and romance), this locally

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26 ►

FKA twigs will
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A-LIST

SATURDAY

DANCE

CHOREOGRAPHERS' EVENING 2019

WALKER ART CENTER

Each year, the Walker's Choreographers' Evening presents a sampling of performances from exciting dance makers on the local scene. Some artists here are well established in their careers, while others are on the precipice of a breakthrough. Even if you're familiar with Twin Cities dance, you're still likely to discover a new gem during this show. And if you're new? Then you're lucky, because you have a whole world to discover. Every installation of this annual performance has a slightly different flavor, as the museum invites a different choreographer or group to curate each event. This year's post-Thanksgiving romp has been put together by SuperGroup, a delightfully energetic collective featuring Erin Search-Wells, Sam Johnson, and Jeffrey Wells. Their selections include Judith Shui Xian, Deja Stowers, Mathew Janczewski, Emily Gastineau, and Sharon Picasso, among many others. 4 and 7 p.m. \$25. 725 Vineland Place, Minneapolis; 612-375-7600. —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

Choreographers'
Evening: SuperGroup



BOBBY ROGERS / WALKER ART CENTER

CONTINUED FROM FRIDAY ►

revered home to repertory cinema has more than earned the trust of its audience. Attendees need only be prepared to expect the unexpected, as these cinematic curators demonstrate their knack for programming that encompasses celebrated classics and underappreciated gems. Experiencing such eclectic cinema with an enthusiastic crowd embodies the core mission of the Trylon while validating its status as an essential destination. As for healthy practices, just remember to stretch between screenings. 9 p.m. \$40. 2820 E. 33rd St., Minneapolis; 612-424-5468. —BRAD RICHASON

COMEDY

LIZA TREYGER

RICK BRONSON'S HOUSE OF COMEDY

Liza Treyger is a standup comic and a real trooper: She was sick in bed when her publicist rang her up for her interview with City Pages, yet the Chicago native was more than happy to talk about comedy and her career. "I definitely have always been a chatter," she says. "I like to perform and I talk a lot. I guess I was funny [as a kid], but I never put together that I could do it as a job." She fell into comedy after going to an open mic to support a friend. "I was watching people perform and thought, 'I think I

could do that.' So I went up—and bombed. I couldn't even finish my time." Undeterred, she returned the following week, this time armed with jokes she had written, and had a much better set. "And I've never stopped," she adds. Most of her comedy today is about her life, from dating to family and friends. She credits her sociology degree with helping her develop a lot of her material. "It's the study of people and their environment and how the world affects people. I think it gives more of an understanding of humanity." 7:30 and 9:45 p.m. Friday; 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday; 9:30 p.m. Saturday. \$16. 408 E. Broadway, Mall of America, Bloomington; 952-858-8558. **Through Sunday** —P.F. WILSON

SATURDAY 11.30

HOLIDAY/THEATER

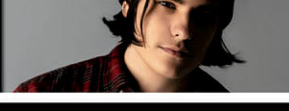
A VERY DIE HARD CHRISTMAS

BRYANT-LAKE BOWL THEATER

It took a few decades before *Die Hard* was recognized as a holiday classic, but the same is true of *A Christmas Story*. These days, however, the original *Die Hard* is probably the most bad-ass entry in the Christmas-film canon. Minnesota friends Josh Carson, Andy Rocco Kraft, Michael Mayket, and Brad Erickson understood this long before many did: Eight years ago they

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UPCOMING SHOWS

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DEC 13 AUDIEN W/ CODEKO 	DEC 14 DIRT MONKEY W/ CONRANK & ZIA 	DEC 19 KHIVA W/ SEPIA, HEBBE & AIMERIE 	DEC 20 SULLIVAN KING B2B KAI WACHI 
DEC 21 NOSTALGIA BEFORE XMAS ALT. ROCK TRIBUTE BAND NIGHT 	DEC 27 NAZAAR W/ LOCAL SUPPORT 	DEC 28 MITIS W/ WILLIAM BLACK, CRYSTAL SKIES & MORE 	JAN 11 SLEEPING WITH SIRENS W/ SET IT OFF, BELMONT & POINT NORTH 
JAN 31 VINCENT W/ PRINCE FOX 	FEB 01 SUBTRONICS W/ HESH, CHEE, BOMMER & LEVEL UP 	FEB 15 MATOMA X TWO FRIENDS CAMP SUPERDOPE! TOUR 	FEB 16 MACHINE HEAD 25TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR 
FEB 22 PEEKABOO W/ TRUTH, ZEKE BEATS & IOXO 	FEB 23 MOTHERFOLK W/ LOCAL SUPPORT 	FEB 29 EKALI A WORLD AWAY TOUR 	MAR 13 FLAW W/ GABRIEL AND THE APOCALYPSE 
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A-LIST

Julie Buffalohead's work walks a line between sweet and salty.



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND BOCKLEY GALLERY

came together to give the story even more yuletide spirit, turning it into a stage show with added cheer. As John McClain, an NYPD cop on vacation in L.A., Carson has fought German terrorists for nearly a decade now, leaving a trail of profanity, blood, and carnage in his wake. Expect big laughs and even some cool cameos, as local celebrities, politicians, and comedians are often invited to play the very important role of Santa Claus. 10 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays; 8 p.m. Sunday, December 1-2. \$18-\$20. 810 W. Lake St., Minneapolis; 612-825-3737. **Through December 21** —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

SUNDAY 12.1

ART/BARHOPPING BREWERS & DOERS HOLIDAY BAZAAR

SURLY BREWING COMPANY

Now in its second year, Brewers & Doers is a large-scale sale and party with a unique blend of crafts, baked goods, music, holiday cheer, and, of course, beer. There will be plenty of Furious flowing among the bakers and makers, fostering a good time. Items include handmade toys, nail polish, garden gnomes, tarot cards, Minnesota-themed pins, ceramics, and cigars. Krampus will be stopping by, and a DJ will play vinyl sets during the event. Remember to bring a new

pair of wool socks: Surly's charitable arm, Surly Gives a Damn, will give you a free pint when you donate to their drive, and they will also enter you into a raffle for prizes. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free. 520 Malcolm Ave. SE, Minneapolis; 763-999-4040. —LOREN GREEN

ART/MUSEUM STORYTELLING: JULIE BUFFALOHEAD

MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ART

Julie Buffalohead's *The Garden*, which was part of the Minneapolis Institute of Art's revolutionary exhibition "Hearts of Our People: Native Women Artists," is a narrative work with twists and turns that are as ironic as the tricksters Rabbit and Coyote themselves. The subject? The controversy over Sam Durant's *Scaffold* at the Walker Art Center. At first glance, this or any of Buffalohead's work appears whimsical, humorous, and fairy tale-like. Look again. A member of the Ponca Tribe, Buffalohead invests her figures with the agency to address ignorance and right wrongs, delve into domesticity, and explore the nuances of contemporary life. That they do so with wicked wit and quiet wisdom speaks to Buffalohead's intelligence and insight. Within the narrative strata lie many truths, which the artist deftly reveals. 2400 Third Ave. S., Minneapolis; 888-642 2787. **Through September 6** —CAMILLE LEFEVRE



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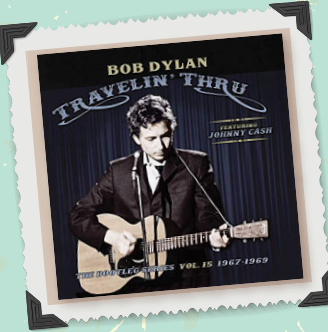
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FILM

WHODUNNIT-AND HOW?

A star-studded cast is just one thing to love about the twisty murder-mystery joyride *Knives Out*



CLAIRE FOLGER

BY TONY LIBERA

Making a whodunnit that's both enjoyable *and* truly puzzling has got to be a challenge in 2019. A century of mystery movies and an onslaught of TV procedurals have baked a deep understanding of genre conventions into pretty much everyone on the planet. To put a little spin on a favorite Bushism, "You can't get fooled again."

So how does Rian Johnson make *Knives Out* work as well as it does? By focusing less on the who and more on the how.

The movie centers on the death of an ultra-rich crime novelist named Harlan Thrombey (Christopher Plummer), whose relatives have gathered for his 85th birthday. After multiple altercations turn the party into a powder keg, Thrombey retires to his study to play Go with his caretaker, Marta (Ana de Armas). When she returns to the mansion the next morning, she finds Thrombey dead, his throat slit and a knife in his hand. It looks like a suicide, but private detective Benoit Blanc (Daniel Craig)—hired under mysterious circumstances—thinks otherwise. And with the entire family at odds, everyone's a suspect.

To reveal more about the plot would give away some piece of the puzzle, so let's leave it at broad strokes. Johnson has crafted an intricate tale here, nodding at *Clue* and Agatha Christie but tweaking tropes enough to avoid being too referential or formulaic. Unlike a lot of murder mysteries, the killer's identity becomes somewhat secondary. Though *Knives Out* is marketed as a whodunnit, it's really a howdedydotat, and that makes it a welcome change of pace. The fact that it still wows is a credit to both Johnson's filmmaking skill and unconventional thinking. It's no surprise, since Johnson broke out with 2005's neo-noir anomaly *Brick*, but it's worth acknowledging given the redundant landscape of the format today.

Of course, these interlocking ensemble pieces are nothing without a cast that can execute across the board. Fortunately, *Knives Out* is overflowing with talent. Craig will likely stand out as the Poirot proxy due to the cool factor of supernatural deduction as much as his character's decidedly not-British accent, but everybody—and I mean everybody—is good here. Chris Evans gleefully plays away from Captain America as dickish grandson Ransom. Don Johnson

KNIVES OUT
directed By Rian Johnson
area theaters, now playing

builds on his sorta-to-super racist scumbag portfolio with gusto. Toni Collette, whose *Hereditary* Oscar-snubbing still bothers me for some reason, pulls no punches as a Goopy Gwyneth Paltrow type. Michael Shannon is obviously Michael Shannon, so his take on youngest son Walt runs the gamut from funny to creepy with ease. And de Armas expertly holds the whole thing together. Even the bit parts are well rounded, with amusing appearances by Frank Oz and M. Emmet Walsh, among others. It's hard to think of a better cast than this.

All together, *Knives Out* unfolds with a handful of great performances and no small amount of ingenuity. It's surprisingly funny and entertaining 'til the end, which makes it one of the better moviegoing experiences this year. With director Johnson tapped for his own *Star Wars* trilogy, there was some concern among fans that he wouldn't have the energy for more novel projects. Thankfully, *Knives Out* shows he's got plenty in the tank. **A-**

AN AUSTEN ERA

The 18th century continues to evolve in 2019

MISS BENNET: CHRISTMAS AT PEMBERLEY

Jungle Theater
2951 Lyndale Ave. S.,
Minneapolis
612-822-7063; through
December 29



DAN NORMAN

BY JAY GABLER

Is Jane Austen the new Shakespeare? Previous generations reimagined *Romeo and Juliet* on the mean streets of New York and in the steamy pools of Mexico City, but now it's *Pride and Prejudice* that's being constantly adapted. That includes a YouTube series; a stack of new novels set everywhere from Pakistan to a zombie apocalypse; and plays, including two recent hits that are both being staged right now in the Twin Cities.

Playwright Kate Hamill, whose fresh literary adaptations include world premieres of *Little Women* last season at the Jungle Theater and Austen's *Emma* this spring at the Guthrie, debuted her *Pride* script in 2017. Director Lisa Channer is now helming a production of Hamill's irreverent play at Park Square Theatre, with a warm ensemble cast that revels in the show's accessible fun.

Best of all is a superb Elizabeth in China Brickey, who epitomizes the character's intelligence, energy, and charm. Paul Rutledge's underplayed Darcy can't hold a candle to this Lizzy, but her infamously boisterous family is well-represented with matriarch George Keller overseeing sisters

Jane (a demure Sara Richardson), Mary (Neal Beckman, playing caricature), and Lydia (Kiara Jackson, preening gleefully).

The play is presented within the confines of a taped-off square, with furnishings towed in from the wings to establish the various settings. Unfortunately, this production, which might have thrived in a more intimate space, is seriously dampened by Park Square's large Proscenium Stage. Floating in darkness with their voices echoing cavernously, the actors seem to be stuck in a Regency-era *Twilight Zone*.

The Jungle is more fortuitously equipped in this respect, with its cozy stage once again transformed into the Pemberley estate for a reprise of *Miss Bennet*. The *Pride and Prejudice* sequel, written by Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon, was previously presented at the Jungle in 2017—with a second Gunderson/Melcon sequel, *The Wickhams*, co-commissioned by the Jungle and staged last year.

If you're seeing only one holiday show this year and you haven't caught *Miss Bennet*, grab your tickets immediately. It's a brilliant play suffused with heart and humor, the Christmas setting adding both poignance and the show's best running gag.

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

Park Square Theatre
20 W. Seventh Place, St. Paul
651-291-7005; through December 22

Mary barks her indignance in Hamill's adaptation, but here she's fleshed out into a fully realized character, perfectly played by returning Christian Bardin.

If you saw *The Wickhams*, you'll appreciate all the more how the playwrights strive to humanize every character (not to mention the ingenious construction that has the two "side-quals" unfolding simultaneously on different levels of the Darcys' mansion). Multiple 2017 performers return, including the priceless Anna Hickey as Anne de Bourgh; new cast members include Andrea San Miguel, whose shameless Lydia had Friday night's audience members shaking with laughter.

By the end, they were gasping with happy tears as the show reached its profoundly moving conclusion. Both of these *Pride*-inspired productions mark welcome returns to Austen's world, and effectively demonstrate just how readily that world can expand. **B+**

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Cedar Cultural Center, Minneapolis
Saturday, November 30

ZOE PRINDS-FLASH

CLEARING HER HEAD

Lydia Liza sobers up, gets real, and returns with her first album in five years

BY ERIK THOMPSON

Most 25-year-old musicians are still looking to get a record deal, have a song go viral, or play First Avenue. Over the past 10 years, Lydia Liza has already done all that.

Liza (real name Lydia Hoglund) was just 15 when her high school group, Bomba De Luz, won a Battle of the Bands contest and went on to achieve indie acclaim. She briefly experienced international attention in 2016 when her consent-centered update of “Baby, It’s Cold Outside” with Josiah Lemanski went viral.

But behind that success, Liza was struggling with alcohol addiction and depression. She checked herself into Hazelden for treatment and has been sober since early 2018. And with a clearer head and a renewed sense of purpose, Liza has just released her best album yet, *Of Unsound Mind*.

“When I think about when I was a teenager, I just felt really sick all the time,” Liza says over coffee on a crisp fall morning in downtown Minneapolis. “I felt really

depressed. I had some good friends, but I sought out some pretty shitty friends. I felt really unsupported, really confused. For me, personally, it was really bad. But it led to me being a lot more stable as an adult, because I’ve had to work through that loneliness.”

That newfound stability permeates the new songs, which have a lot more punch, both emotionally and sonically, than the restrained folk pop of her former band. But not all the songs are new: Some date back to her time with Bomba, like the re-recorded “Be Minor” and “He Should Know By Now,” which was written when she was 16. A snapshot of Liza’s personal journey, *Of Unsound Mind* addresses the highs and lows she’s experienced with candor and grace.

“At the end of my drinking, I started to get really manic about wanting to create but never being able to finish anything,” Liza says. She assembled a band with guitarist Kelly Blau, bassist Jimmy Osterholt, and drummer Jessica Anderson, but just as she started working with them she realized she

needed to go into treatment. “It was three or four months into being sober, I was like, ‘Let’s just fucking do it. Let’s make a record.’”

Liza decided to fund the album via Kickstarter, then Justin Courtney Pierre of Motion City Soundtrack, touring solo, asked her to join his band. “The day I left on tour was the day we made the Kickstarter live,” she says. “Justin was such a huge part of us reaching our goal, because each night at the shows, he was telling his fans to donate. He’s a very good man.” The Kickstarter raised over \$13,000, exceeding Liza’s \$12,000 goal.

Pierre is also a guest vocalist on one of the new album’s standout tracks, “Crow on a Branch,” and helped Liza rediscover her love of pop punk, which courses through the record. Pierre gave Liza a custom-made pedal board made by Pierre’s other guitarist, Tommy Rehbein, that featured both a fuzz and distortion pedal, which encouraged Liza to get noisy.

“Being a woman in the music industry can be really difficult. Especially if you fit the trope of being a singer/songwriter with an acoustic guitar,” Liza says with a sigh. “It shouldn’t be like that, but it is. Picking up an electric guitar, for me, made me feel like I could take myself more seriously, and that other people should too. And I’m going to yell on the record, darn it. I felt so empowered being one of the guitarists on Justin’s tour. I felt like, ‘I can do this! I can rip! I want to rip!’”

And Liza does indeed rip on “Be Minor,” “Crow on a Branch,” and “Starting to Choke,” a song that was originally a “jazz ballad,” Liza says. But when she came back from Pierre’s tour she transformed it into a Brand New-inspired pop-punk jam that also has elements of the slow-burning vulnerability of Jeff Buckley and the fierce erudition of Laura Marling.

Of Unsound Mind has moments of hushed elegance too. “Cardiologist,” about a heart condition that required Liza to have surgery, is also a kiss-off to a guy who quickly proved that he wasn’t the one. And the acoustic album-closer, “No Fighter,” serves as a lovely denouement to the album’s themes of survival and rebirth, with a heavenly string arrangement by Jillian Rae.

Where Bomba featured a collaborative approach to songwriting, Liza is leading the way with her new group. “We haven’t had a chance to be that creative together yet,” she says. “So I have been in way more of a directorial role than I’ve ever been. Where it’s like, ‘OK, I’ve finished this song, you do this, I’m kind of hearing this, we need

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more of this.' I'm actually managing that in a way that I've never had to do before, which is terrifying. I never in my life took myself seriously, so now I'm kind of learning how to."

Liza's public candor about her sobriety and her mental health struggles translates fluidly to the songs and subject matter on *Of Unsound Mind*. It is an assured, confident collection of songs from a musician who refused to fall victim to addiction and depression, took accountability for her mistakes even as she learned from them, and didn't let herself get jaded about the music industry's treatment of her as a teenage girl.

"I feel it really does have a timeline to it, especially since some of the songs come from when I was a teenager," Liza explains. "It feels more like a catharsis, stuff that I had to get out in order to even think about doing anything else. I think the thing that scares people so much about sobriety, or recovery, or even just pulling back on their abuse of a substance, is reality and having to truly deal with shit. But that is where the depth comes from that allows people to be creative, I think. Once you look the thing you are afraid of in the face then you can name it and you can talk openly about it, which I think is a really important thing to do in order to create art that other people identify with." **CP**

CRITICS' PICKS

ISSUES

VARSITY THEATER, WEDNESDAY 11.27
Issues combine Linkin Park's cosmically grandiose, vaguely sociopolitical angst with an emo band's bratty, romantic whining. The Atlanta band's new *Beautiful Oblivion* augments their crunchy metal riffs with bits of the corny pop genres they secretly enjoy, including heartwarming retro-soul ("Get It Right"), exaggerated Auto-Tuned crooning ("Tapping Out"), and their very own Michael Buble song ("Find Forever"). With Polyphia, Lil Aaron, Sleep Token, and Cold Kingdom. 4 p.m. \$27.1308 Fourth St. SE, Minneapolis; 612-604-0222. —LUCAS FAGEN

KIM PETRAS

PALACE THEATRE, SATURDAY 11.30
Kim Petras is an enthusiastic, well studied avant-pop formalist, as chirpy and detached as PC Music or Charli XCX with cheerful ingenuity in place of calculated musical deconstruction. Of her two 2019 albums, *Clarity* is the straightforward synthpop genre exercise, *Turn Off the Light* the Halloween horrorshow, peaking on the warbled, gushy, self-explanatory "Death by Sex." With Alex Chapman. 6 p.m. \$33.50. 17 W. Seventh Place, St. Paul; 612-338-8388. —LUCAS FAGEN

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>> *By Rob Brezsny*

♉ TAURUS (April 20–May 20): What's something you're afraid of, but pretty confident you could become unafraid of? The coming weeks will be a favorable time to dismantle or dissolve that fear. Your levels of courage will be higher than usual, and your imagination will be unusually ingenious in devising methods and actions to free you of the unnecessary burden. Step one: Formulate an image or scene that symbolizes the dread, and visualize yourself blowing it up with a "bomb" made of a hundred roses.

I GEMINI (May 21-June 20): The word "enantiodromia" refers to a phenomenon that occurs when a vivid form of expression turns into its opposite, often in dramatic fashion. Yang becomes yin; resistance transforms into welcome; loss morphs into gain. According to my reading of the astrological omens, you Gemini are the sign of the zodiac that's most likely to experience enantiodromia in the coming weeks. Will it be a good thing or a bad thing? You can have a lot of influence over how that question resolves. For best results, don't fear or demonize contradictions and paradoxes. Love and embrace them.

69 CANCER (June 21-July 22): There are Americans who speak only one language, English, and yet imagine they are smarter than bilingual immigrants. That fact amazes me, and inspires me to advise me and all my fellow Cancerians to engage in humble reflection about how we judge our fellow humans. Now is a favorable time for us to take inventory of any inclinations we might have to regard ourselves as superior to others; to question why we might imagine others aren't as worthy of love and respect as we are; or to be skeptical of any tendency we might have dismiss and devalue those who don't act and think as we do. I'm not saying we Cancerians are more guilty of these sins than everyone else. I'm merely letting you know that the coming weeks are our special time to make corrections.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): "Erotic love is one of the highest forms of contemplation," wrote the sensually wise poet Kenneth Rexroth. That's a provocative and profitable inspiration for you to tap into. According to my analysis of the astrological omens, you're in the Season of Lucky Plucky Delight, when brave love can save you from wrong turns and irrelevant ideas; when the grandeur of amour can be your teacher and catalyst. If you have a partner with whom you can conduct these educational experiments, wonderful. If you don't, be extra sweet and intimate with yourself.

MP VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): In the follow-up story to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, our heroine uses a magic mirror as a portal into a fantastical land. There she encounters the Red Queen, and soon the two of them are holding hands as they run as fast as they can. Alice notices that despite their great effort, they don't seem to be moving forward. What's happening? The Queen clears up the mystery: In her realm, you must run as hard as possible just to remain in the same spot. Sound familiar, Virgo? I'm wondering whether you've had a similar experience lately. If so, here's my advice: Stop running. Sit back, relax, and allow the world to zoom by you. Yes, you might temporarily fall behind. But in the meantime, you'll get fully recharged. No more than three weeks from now, you'll be so energized that you'll make up for all the lost time—and more.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Most sane people wish there could be less animosity between those who have different beliefs and interests. How much better the world would be if everyone felt a generous acceptance toward those who are unlike them. But the problem goes even deeper: Most of us are at odds with ourselves. Here's how author Rebecca West described it: Even the different parts of the same person do not often converse among themselves, do not succeed in learning from each other. That's the bad news, Libra. The good news is that the coming weeks will be a favorable time for you to promote unity and harmony among all the various parts of yourself. I urge you to entice them to enter into earnest conversations with each other!

M **SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Poet Cecilia Woloch asks, "How to un-want what the body has wanted, explain how the flesh in its wisdom was wrong?" Did the apparent error occur because of some "some ghost in the mind?" she adds. Was it due to "some blue chemical rushing the blood" or "some demon or god"? I'm sure that you, like most of us, have experienced this mystery. But the good news is that in the coming weeks you will have the power to un-want inappropriate or unhealthy experiences that your body has wanted. Step one: Have a talk with yourself about why the thing your body has wanted isn't in alignment with your highest good.

♐ **SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Sagittarian composer Ludwig van Beethoven was inclined to get deeply absorbed in his work. Even when he took time to attend to the details of daily necessity, he allowed himself to be spontaneously responsive to compelling musical inspirations that suddenly welled up in him. On more than a few occasions, he lathered his face with the nineteenth-century equivalent of shaving cream, then got waylaid by a burst of brilliance and forgot to actually shave. His servants found that amusing. I suspect that the coming weeks may be Beethoven-like for you, Sagittarius. I bet you'll be surprised by worthy fascinations and subject to impromptu illuminations.

♈ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): During the next 11 months, you could initiate fundamental improvements in the way you live from day to day. It's conceivable you'll discover or generate innovations that permanently raise your life's possibilities to a higher octave. At the risk of sounding grandiose, I'm tempted to predict that you'll celebrate at least one improvement that is your personal equivalent of the invention of the wheel or the compass or the calendar.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): The only thing we learn from history is that we never learn anything from history. Philosopher Georg Hegel said that. But I think you will have an excellent chance to disprove this theory in the coming months. I suspect you will be inclined and motivated to study your own past in detail; you'll be skilled at drawing useful lessons from it; and you will apply those lessons with wide panache as you re-route your destiny.

X PISCES (Feb. 19–March 20): In his own time, poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–1882) was acclaimed and beloved. At the height of his fame, he earned \$3,000 per poem. But modern literary critics think that most of what he created is derivative, sentimental, and unworthy of serious appreciation. In dramatic contrast is poet Emily Dickinson (1830–1886). Her writing was virtually unknown in her lifetime, but is now regarded as among the best ever. In accordance with astrological omens, I invite you to sort through your own past so as to determine which of your work, like Longfellow's, should be archived as unimportant or irrelevant, and which, like Dickinson's, deserves to be a continuing inspiration as you glide into the future.

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BY BRENDAN EMMETT QUIGLEY

1 Shirt and tie, e.g.
5 Makes a decision (to)
9 "I'm through with
this IM," briefly
13 Lake that becomes
another common
crossword answer
with either an A or
an E in its front
14 Bathtub toy
15 Macy's rival
16 Beret holder
17 Tomato's home
18 Supercomputer
that's partially in
the Smithsonian

1 Scores roughly 85%
2 Franklin of soul
3 Baptism or bris
4 Conflict or grudge
5 Anticipate and prevent an
unnecessary action
6 End of many
theoretical trips
7 Zesty flavor
8 "Forget this correction"
9 More aristocratic
10 Trait of the
easily offended
11 Perennial swing st.
12 Presidential
advisory grp.
15 2016 Key &
Peele comedy
20 Traveled by plane
21 Without thinking
25 Aquarium residents
in dark tanks
26 Little one
28 Portsmouth pisser

29 Out and out
30 Put a line through
34 Pie-maker's ingredients
35 Hair line?
36 "Don't move"
37 White wine, for short
38 "Bull" network
39 Gobble (gobble!)
41 Company
42 Nasal cavity cleaning
contraption
44 Big name in pickles
45 Approving words
46 Spot for slopping
47 Was in need for
recharging
48 Politician who organized
the "24 Hours of Reality"
49 Doesn't use every
piece, say
54 Waffle House rival
55 Postseason game
56 Key in the water
57 Delivery specialists,
for short
58 Hit on the head

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I'm a heterosexual cis woman in a monogamous marriage. My husband and I have always struggled to connect sexually, mostly because he has extreme anxiety that makes doing anything new or different difficult. He's been in therapy since before I met him, but it doesn't seem to be helping much. His anxiety has caused him to shut down every sexual ask I've ever made because he's afraid he won't "do it right." He's a PIV-and-nothing-more kind of guy, but I'm not asking for varsity-level stuff, just boring things like talking about fantasies, a little role play, staying in bed on a Sunday just to have sex, etc. All of it is off the table. I understand he has a right

to veto sex acts, but isn't this all pretty basic, run-of-the-mill stuff? He'll still get his PIV; I just want there to be other elements before the PIV starts. It's still a no. Talking to him about this sends him into a depressive episode where I then have to spend hours telling him he's not a bad person, so I've stopped bringing it up. I've tried to talk to therapists about navigating this issue, but most change the subject. One actually told me that it was good that we don't have good sex, because if we did, we wouldn't have good communication in other areas. (I never went back to that one.) This has gone on for so long that I've lost all interest in sex. My libido, which used to be very high, has vanished. Whenever he wants sex, I do it—but I dread it. Do you have any ideas on how I can navigate this topic with my husband so he doesn't shut down? How can I make him understand that it's okay to experiment sexually and it will be okay if it's not perfect?

LOST AND SO SAD

You're going to have to call your husband's bluff, LASS, and power through the predictable meltdown. That means raising—again—your unhappiness with your sex life, explaining your need for some pre-PIV intimacy and play, informing him this is no longer a desperate request but a non-negotiable demand, and then refusing to shift into caregiver mode when his depressive episode starts.

I'm not suggesting your husband's anxiety and depression are an act, LASS, or that being made aware of your unhappiness isn't a trigger. But if depressive episodes get your husband out of conversations he'd rather avoid—and if they allow him to dictate the terms of your sex

life and treat your pussy like a Fleshlight—then his subconscious could be weaponizing those depressive episodes. And if you shift to caregiver mode every single time—so long as you're willing to spend hours reassuring him that he's not a bad person—then your grievances will never be addressed, much less resolved. So even if it means spending an extremely unpleasant evening, weekend, or few

weeks with him, you're going to have to raise the issue and refuse to reassure your husband. Line up whatever support you think he might need before you make your stand—you could also make your stand during a couples counseling session—and give him maybe one "You're not a bad person, really!" and then refuse to back down.

And when he shuts down, LASS, it will be his therapist's job to pry him back open, not yours.

And the sex you're currently having? The sex you dread and don't enjoy? The sooner you stop having it, LASS, the sooner your husband will come to understand that he's going to have to give a little (so very little!) if he wants to have sex at all. If and when he does, then you can borrow a page from the varsity-level kinkster handbook: Take baby steps. In the same way people who are turned on by, say, more intense bondage scenes (suspension, immobilization, etc.) start with lighter bondage scenes (hands behind the back, spread-eagled on the bed, etc.), you can start with something small and easy for him to get right, like 20 minutes of cuddling in bed together on a Sunday morning before progressing to PIV sex.



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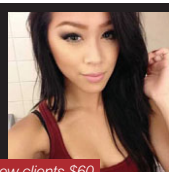
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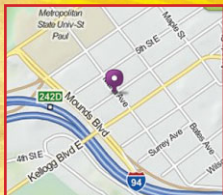
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110
Computer/Technical

Eagle Creek Software Services seeks Application Development Consultant in Eden Prairie, MN
Qualified candidates must have B.S. in Computer Science, Mathematics, Electrical Engineering, or related; five years of software developer experience; knowledge of Oracle, SQL, or other database management system, Java, J2EE, JavaScript, and frameworks such as JSP, Struts and Hibernate; and demonstrated proficiency with HTML, XML, SOAP, RESTful and Web Services. Travel required within the U.S.; remote work benefit. Please send resume and cover letter, including salary requirements, to Attn: HR, Eagle Creek Software Services, 10050 Crosstown Circle, Ste 650, Eden Prairie, MN 55344.

307
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All single other sports cards 15% off • All 2019 unopened packs and boxes dated post Oct 31 10% off

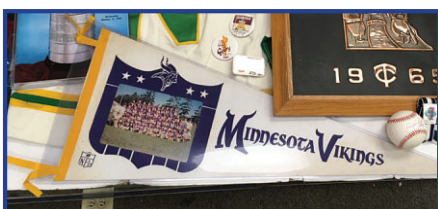
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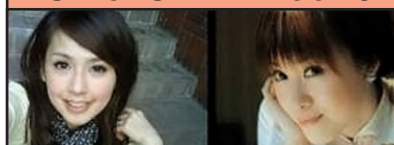
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